

December 14, 2006

TO: California Biodiversity Council

FROM: Chris Nota, Chair, Executive Committee

SUBJECT: Progress Report - Biodiversity Along the Border Committee

At our September 27-28 Council field tour and meeting in San Diego, the Council decided to form a new "Biodiversity Along the Border Committee" to follow up on several action items that were identified at the meeting. Those action items are:

- 1) identify next steps for pursuing the Las Californias Binational Conservation Initiative
- 2) consider new or revised conservation easements in the region
- 3) seeking funds for several water quality improvement projects in the Tijuana River Basin

At the September meeting, you directed the Executive Committee and staff to organize the Biodiversity Along the Border Committee and have at least one meeting prior to our next Council meeting on December 14. While we have not been able to organize a meeting of the committee yet, the group will begin meeting in San Diego in January. Here are the major actions that have occurred since we met in September.

- Secretary Chrisman identified Mike Chapel to serve as the overall project coordinator until a replacement for Under Secretary Mike Wintemute is named. Mike is working with Ricardo Martinez (State Water Resources Control Board) to coordinate work from Sacramento.
- Janet Fairbanks has been hired by the CBC, through a purchase order by the University of California, to coordinate and facilitate the work by the Committee
- Janet has completed a work plan that was approved by the Executive Committee in November. The CBC is providing about \$18K to fund the first of two phases of the project. We are still seeking another \$15K to finance Janet to complete the project.
- Janet, Mike, Lauren McNees, and Ricardo Martinez have been working together to organize the committee and plan the first meeting.
- All of the participating CBC member agencies have identified their representatives to the committee and all of the identified officials from Mexico have agreed to participate
- The most likely date for the first meeting will be January __, 2007 as this works for the CBC member agencies. The final date will be selected when calendars are coordinated with the officials from Mexico.
- The meetings for the committee will begin in San Diego at the headquarters for the regional water quality control board and may move to the new office of the Department of Parks and Recreation later in the year.
- The current list of participants is available at the registration table. If you would like to participate and are not yet on the list, please tell Lauren McNees.

We will continue to report the progress of this committee as it completes its work in the coming months.